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IDENTIFICATION OF CRIMINALS

The Borstal System.—In an address delivered by Sir Evelyn Ruggles-Brise, chairman of the English Prison Commission in London, March 27, he laid down the following principles which, he said, should underlie the system:

(1) That every young criminal was a potential good citizen up to the age of his civil majority if appropriate and wise means were applied to his reformation; (2) that the diminution of crime in this country was to be sought by the amendment of the individual and not by the terror of punishment; (3) that the element of time was essential if any progress was to be made in the reform of the individual; and (4) that there must be a length of sentence and detention which was not relative to the particular act committed, but to the perverted character of the young man, and that in order to supplement any work done by the prison authority there must be a strenuous and highly-organized After-Care Association to take the lad on discharge. J. W. G.

National Conference of Charities and Corrections.—The Thirty-eighth National Conference of Charities and Corrections was held in Boston, from June 7 to June 14. One of the meetings was devoted to the subject of "law-breakers," at which papers were read by Dr. William Healy of Chicago on "Mental Defects and Delinquency;" by Dr. James F. Jackson of Cleveland, on "Treatment of Misdemeanants," and by Mr. Arthur W. Towne of Albany, on "Organization of Systems of Probation and Parole." Another session was devoted to "Drunkenness," at which a report on "The Relation of the Liquor Question to the Labor Movement" was made by Mr. John Mitchell; a paper on "Scientific Aspects of Drunkenness," by Dr. S. M. Gregory, of the Bellevue (New York) Hospital; one by Prof. Hatton, of Western Reserve University, on the "Legal and Legislative Aspects of Drunkenness," and one by Miss Alice L. Higgins of Boston on "An Educative Campaign for the Prevention of Drunkenness," were read. J. W. G.

New Methods of Marking Criminals.—Dr. Icard of Paris, says the New York *Tribune*, has invented a new method of branding convicted criminals which will greatly aid in their subsequent identification. It consists in the injection under the skin of a small quantity of paraffin. This forms a slight hump, which remains the rest of the person's life without the least danger to his health. A detective arresting such a man, or even before arresting him, would, on feeling the hump, know him instantly for an old offender. No uninformed person need know that the small swelling was a mark of a previous conviction, and would take it to be a natural excrescence. Dr. Icard thinks that, in accordance with his scheme, a regular language of signs might be prearranged by means of the paraffin hump. Thus, for example, it would be agreed all over the world that the right shoulder blade should be reserved for operations upon confirmed criminals. The area thus defined would be divided into three parts. The upper would be reserved for "very dangerous" criminals, the middle for dangerous and the lower for less dangerous. J. W. G.

Medico-Legal Worth of Finger Prints.—In the *Archiv Fur Kriminal Anthropologie und Kriminalistik*, 1911, Bd. 40, S. 320-333, Prof. Dr. Lochte of Göttingen makes a valuable contribution to the literature of finger prints. After narrating how the use of the print first arose and has since been adopted